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AMERICAN ART NEWS.

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Advertising Rates on Application.

The office of the AMERICAN ART NEWS is now prepared to procure for patrons and readers expert opinion at a nominal rate on pictures or art objects, to attend to the buying, restoration, framing, cleaning and varnishing of pictures, and to repair art objects, at reasonable rates.

In the interest of our readers, and in order to facilitate business, we are prepared to publish in our advertising columns, special notices of pictures and other art works, with reference to the individual desire of any owner or buyer to sell or purchase any particular example.

Should any of our readers desire any special information on art matters of any kind, we shall be glad to put our sources of information at their service.

WHERE THE AMERICAN ART NEWS CAN BE FOUND IN EUROPE.

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GREAT ART SALE ABANDONED.

The abandonment, almost at the last moment, of the sale at auction of the residence and contents of the Fifth Ave. residence of the late James Henry Smith—better known as the Whitney Mansion—through its purchase, with contents, by Mr. Harry Payne Whitney, is a distinct disappointment to the many who had believed, with reason, that the sale would direct the attention of the public to the value and interest of art collecting, and would stimulate business in the art world, which has not come up to expectations in this season of returning prosperity.

The sale and preceding exhibition would also have afforded the art public an opportunity to see and study the remarkable interior appointments and art treasures of the great house, not now likely to be afforded.

We are a long way from the days when collectors and house owners, such as the late August Belmont, Marshall O. Roberts, William Tilden Blodget, John Taylor Johnston and their fellows, threw open their houses and collections

to the public, often for charitable objects, almost every winter.

The fashion now prevails among American collectors to guard their art collections, a view of which would do much to improve the public taste, most jealously, and to conceal, as far as possible, even their purchases of notable pictures or art objects. The result is that only a limited number of friends, and these only, in many instances, at society functions, are permitted to view these treasures.

It is only, therefore, when a sale to settle an estate is given that the public gets a sight of the great art collections of the city and country.

The abandonment of the Smith sale will direct attention the more strongly to that of the Yerkes collections, which will probably be an event of the near future.

CAVEAT EMPTOR.

The changes in the Art Tariff, and especially the new provisions permitting the entrance, duty free, of pictures more than twenty, and art objects, furniture, etc., more than a hundred years old, have resulted and are resulting, as we predicted last winter, in the flooding of the country with so-called art works of all kinds and descriptions. Virtually hordes of so-called dealers in pictures, bric-a-brac, antiques, and stuff of all kinds are daily arriving from all parts of Europe, and while some excellent European houses are establishing branches in New York and elsewhere, and some desirable pictures and goods have come and are coming, there are too many undesirable purveyors already here and due to arrive, and far too much suspicious and cheap stuff both here and on the way.

The Custom House appraisers are overworked—Mr. Hecht in New York has been forced to ask for assistance—and the Public Stores are piled high with art importations of all kinds.

We would urge upon our readers and the art public, especial caution in their purchases this season. So far as is possible we shall exclude from our advertising and reading columns the cards or notices of persons of whose responsibility and standing we have any doubt, and we shall at all times be pleased to give any information that may aid in guiding prospective buyers aright, or warning them of danger, or against loss.

We would call attention to the standing and reputation of the firms and houses which advertise in our columns, and whom we notice, and we can safely recommend them to our readers and the art public.

We wish and hope to make an advertisement or notice in the ART NEWS a guarantee of honest dealing and good faith—and we do not care for the advertising of firms or individuals whom we cannot safely endorse.

A new impressionist has made his appearance in this year's salon—J. W. Grierson, of New York. "A Memory" is quite typical of his work, and it promises to be one of the best-liked incidents of the exhibition's progress across the country.

SMITH SALE ABANDONED.

There will be no public sale at auction of the Fifth Avenue residence and contents owned by the late James Henry Smith, better known as the Whitney mansion.

After all arrangements had been made by the American Art Association for the exhibition next week, and the sale at the house the following week—even to the preparation of a sumptuous catalogue—it is announced that Mr. Harry Payne Whitney, son of the late William C. Whitney, and who married Miss Gertrude Vanderbilt, daughter of the late Cornelius Vanderbilt, has purchased the house and contents from Mr. Grant Mason, who inherited it from his uncle, the late James Henry Smith, for a price said to be a trifle under \$3,000,000.

Sentiment played an important part in the transaction. The late William C. Whitney was very proud of his house, and especially of its art treasures and furnishings, on which he spent, through the late Stanford White, an enormous sum. No private house in America is more sumptuously furnished. Practically everything in the house, except the floors and framework, came from Europe, and several old chateaus in France and Italy were despoiled to adorn this New York mansion. With the exception of the ballroom, the interior is an example of the Italian Renaissance.

Mr. Whitney will take possession of his new home Jan. 20.

The late James Henry Smith, who purchased the house from the Whitney estate in 1904, is said to have paid something like \$2,500,000 for it and its contents. He added several pictures and some art objects, but the most important of these have been removed since his death. His will provided that Mr. Whitney should have the first option of purchase, but the latter was unable to avail himself of this until now.

From the art commercial viewpoint, while the preservation of the house and contents is generally hailed with satisfaction, there is disappointment expressed at the calling off of the sale, which it was felt would do much to stimulate the art business. Many leading European dealers had announced their intention of coming over for the event, and it is probable that had the sale been held, it would have resulted in some of the beneficent results of the Marquand sale, to the art trade.

Mr. Kirby, of the American Art Association had expended much time and thought in the preparations for the sale, and the catalogue, and although it is understood that matters have been most satisfactorily arranged with the American Art Association, it is none the less a natural disappointment to that organization, to have so much work go for naught.

Money paid for sale tickets will be refunded. Subscribers to the De Luxe Catalogue are privileged to cancel their subscriptions.

ART IMPORTS QUINTUPLED.

A special cable dispatch to the Sun from Paris says Deputy-Consul Yost estimates that the value of works of art exported from Europe to the United States in 1909 was five times as great as the value of those exported in the preceding year, reaching a total of probably \$40,000,000.

American collectors still find Paris the most important source of art treasures. Art works to the value of \$1,200,000 left Paris in September alone. England is the second best hunting ground, Italy third and Germany fourth.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Twachtman's Death Date.

Editor, American Art News:

Dear Sir: Mr. L. H. Meakins's interesting letter, published in your issue of Dec. 25, about the Cincinnati Art Museum, contains a curious error.

It is twice stated therein that J. H. Twachtman died about fourteen years ago, whereas, the fact is that he died in Gloucester, Mass., on Aug. 8, 1902, between seven and eight years since.

Yours very truly,
Walter Rowlands.

Needham, Mass., Jan. 4, 1910.

[Mr. Meakin had called our attention to this manifest error, of which Mr. Rowland speaks, and we had ourselves discovered it—before the receipt of Mr. Rowlands' kind letter. The mistake was simply due to "Those terrible types" which apparently spare neither the living nor the dead.—Ed.]

OBITUARY.

Darius Ogden Mills.

Darius Ogden Mills, a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum, and chairman of the board of directors of that institution, died at his country place near San Francisco on Tuesday last, aged 84. While prominent in the circle of art patrons and collectors, identified with the Metropolitan as officer or active member, Mr. Mills was not himself a collector or connoisseur of note. His tastes were more for business than art, although he was a generous donor to the Museum and friendly to all art movements.

Charles Henry Ludington.

Charles Henry Ludington, a patron of the arts, died in New York on Monday last, aged 84. He was a member of the Century, a fellow of the National Academy and a patron of the Metropolitan Museum and the American Fine Arts Society. He was not a collector or connoisseur of note.

Trask's Death and Art Club.

The death in a railroad accident last Friday, after the ART NEWS had gone to press, of Spencer Trask, president of the National Arts Club, was a distinct loss to the cause of art in New York, and a heavy blow to the National Arts Club, of which he had been for many years the leading spirit, and also financial backer.

There have been fears expressed that Mr. Trask's untimely decease might result in financial embarrassment to the Arts Club, for it is said that the Club is indebted to his estate in the sum of \$40,000 or more for advances.

"Mr. Trask was the 'angel' of the Club," said a prominent member. "For years he had been its financial backer and patron. His assurance to members that the interest on a large loan would be met, brought about the final decision to erect the present club house. He had a large studio on the sixth floor which was one of the finest in the city." Robert Hamilton Rucker, treasurer of the Club, said to an American reporter:

"While Mr. Trask has been of great financial assistance to the Club and while his death is an irreparable loss to us personally, his death will not throw the Club into financial straits."

It was learned that Mr. Trask, with the assistance of a number of prominent members had about completed far-reaching plans for the development of the Club into a focus of expression of the artistic and literary culture, not only of the city, but of the American continent. The men who were at work with him on these plans have pledged themselves to carry them out as a tribute to his memory.